
Transcript of Telephone Interview

Daniel Horwitz interviewing Treyton Lattimore

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1 MR. HORWITZ: -- so much. I -- I know this wasn't
2 easy. But --

3 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, no, it's all good, man. I
4 would have gotten back to you sooner, but I've had a lot of
5 stuff going on with work and stuff, so [indiscernible].

6 MR. HORWITZ: No. I -- I understand. And you're
7 doing us a huge favor here. I -- I'm just trying to figure
8 out what happened. Can you -- can you tell me about that,
9 or tell me who -- who might know?

10 MR. LATTIMORE: Well, the only person who knows
11 what happened in the cell with Adams would be Elledge. And
12 Elledge now, I believe, is at Riverbend Maximum Security.

13 MR. HORWITZ: Right. And indicted, right?

14 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. He's been charged -- like
15 the day that that stuff happened [indiscernible]. And so
16 the only thing that I can speak on is from the time I got
17 the call on the radio, because I was an officer in another
18 unit that night.

19 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

20 MR. LATTIMORE: But I was what was known as ERT,
21 which is the emergency response team. And so whenever I got
22 the call, I just responded to it.

23 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. So do you still work there?

24 MR. LATTIMORE: No, I don't.

25 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. When -- can you -- can you

1 tell me when you stopped working there?

2 MR. LATTIMORE: I stopped working there in May.

3 MR. HORWITZ: All right.

4 MR. LATTIMORE: Yeah, so it was pretty recent.

5 MR. HORWITZ: So you're the first one who got the
6 call that -- that what, there was an assault, or somebody
7 was injured?

8 MR. LATTIMORE: Well -- well, we didn't know that
9 it was an assault, because the call that we got over the
10 radio -- because the officers that were down there, they
11 didn't actually physically see the assault. What we got a
12 call over the radio was we had a medical emergency, because
13 there was an inmate face down in a pool of blood.

14 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

15 MR. LATTIMORE: And from there -- I was over in
16 Bravo Unit, which is right next to Segregation on that
17 compound.

18 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

19 MR. LATTIMORE: And whenever I got there there was
20 a member of SORT (phonetic) that was already there, there
21 was one other officer, and the two officers that were
22 responsible for Alpha Unit that night.

23 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. And this happened in
24 Alpha Unit?

25 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes, this happened in Alpha Echo.

1 MR. HORWITZ: So where -- where were the officers
2 who were responsible for that unit? That's part of why I'm
3 [indiscernible].

4 MR. LATTIMORE: They were -- they were actually in
5 -- whenever they discovered the inmate, doing count.

6 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. So the --

7 MR. LATTIMORE: And --

8 MR. HORWITZ: -- no -- nobody saw the fight take
9 place --

10 MR. LATTIMORE: Correct.

11 MR. HORWITZ: -- or anything?

12 MR. LATTIMORE: No.

13 MR. HORWITZ: And do we know how long -- how much
14 time elapsed between when he was -- when he was hit and when
15 he was discovered?

16 MR. LATTIMORE: On that one, I'm not sure. But
17 what I can say is, I was one of the first officers -- I was
18 the officer that had like a front-row seat whenever we
19 opened the door. And the blood that was around his head was
20 dried.

21 MR. HORWITZ: Was dry.

22 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

23 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. So we're talking about --

24 MR. LATTIMORE: So it had -- it had been a while.
25 Yeah, it had been a while. And I was the officer that

1 started CPR.

2 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

3 MR. LATTIMORE: And I'm not a doctor or anything,
4 but once I started CPR, he was dead.

5 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. First of all, thank you for
6 -- for --

7 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, yeah, of course, of course.

8 MR. HORWITZ: -- talking through this. I
9 imagine --

10 MR. LATTIMORE: Yeah [indiscernible].

11 MR. HORWITZ: -- just how traumatic for you to --

12 MR. LATTIMORE: I meant to -- like I meant to do
13 it like earlier. Because I was talking to the lady who runs
14 the -- the Trousdale site -- the Trousdale "shut it down"
15 site.

16 MR. HORWITZ: Right.

17 MR. LATTIMORE: And -- and like I meant to
18 -- like I've been meaning to get back to her as well, and
19 then your private investigator, too. But I've just had a
20 lot of stuff like get dropped on me at home, and stuff like
21 that. So --

22 MR. HORWITZ: No, I understand.

23 MR. LATTIMORE: -- like I apologize for -- for my
24 procrastination on it. I should have got it done sooner.

25 MR. HORWITZ: It's -- it's -- it's okay. I -- I

1 really appreciate it. And I'm -- I'm sure that it's --

2 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, yes, sir.

3 MR. HORWITZ: -- traumatic for you as well.

4 MR. LATTIMORE: Well, I mean -- and this -- this
5 is going to sound a little jacked up, but it's honestly not,
6 because I was a military police officer. So I was exposed
7 to like stuff like this before. That's why I'm able to tell
8 you this stuff in a calm demeanor, because I'm -- it -- it
9 sounds like [indiscernible] it sounds really jacked up, but
10 I'm used to it.

11 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. Are there no cameras or
12 anything that would have shown what happened?

13 MR. LATTIMORE: Within the cell, no.

14 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

15 MR. LATTIMORE: The only cameras that are in --
16 there are two cameras in Alpha Echo. There's one at the
17 beginning of the pod, and there's one on the backside of the
18 pod.

19 Where they were at, they where in Alpha Echo 213.
20 And right there, there are no cameras that can view inside
21 of that cell. Plus for privacy reasons, we can't put
22 cameras in the cell, unless they are a suicide risk, and
23 they're on suicide watch. Other than that, there are no
24 cameras in the cells.

25 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. How -- how often does

1 something like this happen? I mean, that it --

2 MR. LATTIMORE: Depending, generally speaking,
3 usually with Trousdale there's a high number of assaults and
4 homicides and overdoses, and stuff like that. Like
5 Trousdale-Turner is a very rough prison to work in and be
6 housed in.

7 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. I mean, I -- I guess what
8 I'm trying to figure out is it seems like there was a
9 significant delay between when he was -- when he was injured
10 and when he was discovered.

11 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

12 MR. HORWITZ: And --

13 MR. LATTIMORE: And -- and what I can say about
14 that is that particular night -- it was December 14th, 2020,
15 that particular night there was two officers working
16 Alpha Unit. There's supposed to be five.

17 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

18 MR. LATTIMORE: But there was --

19 MR. HORWITZ: Do you -- do you know why the other
20 three weren't there?

21 MR. LATTIMORE: Staffing issues. There -- there
22 was no one that we could put on the schedule to take -- to
23 like man those posts, because we literally did not have the
24 staff.

25 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Is there --

1 MR. LATTIMORE: Like that night, like that
2 particular night, the officer that I was training was a
3 brand-new officer. And whenever that stuff happened, you
4 know, I had to leave him in Bravo Unit by himself. And I
5 was also one of the officers that had to go to the hospital
6 with [indiscernible] Adams.

7 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

8 MR. LATTIMORE: And so literally -- so whenever I
9 left and another officer left, that left two other pods with
10 two other units with one officer in it. So that was two
11 units with 360 inmates, with one officer.

12 MR. HORWITZ: Jeez.

13 MR. LATTIMORE: Yeah.

14 MR. HORWITZ: So that -- in -- in this unit where
15 this happened, there were 360 inmates?

16 MR. LATTIMORE: I'm not sure of the exact numbers,
17 because I wasn't counting that.

18 MR. HORWITZ: But around there?

19 MR. LATTIMORE: [indiscernible] but generally
20 speaking that's the capacity, yes, 360 inmates.

21 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. So I -- I assume like with
22 five officers [indiscernible] might be able to hear a fight,
23 or something like that?

24 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, yeah, definitely, definitely.
25 Because with five officers that means that there's one

1 officer per pod, and officers are like sitting in the pod.
2 You know, so if there was an officer in there when the fight
3 was happening, yes, it would have been heard, and they would
4 have been dealt with it.

5 But in my honest opinion, Adams died because of
6 the lack of staffing. If someone was there, then it could
7 have been prevented -- or at least, you know, like --
8 because I'm not sure of why they fought.

9 I know Elledge, he already kind of had a
10 reputation as being kind of crazy, because from like my
11 understanding, Elledge had already killed cellmates before,
12 so he shouldn't have been housed with anyone in the first
13 place.

14 But [indiscernible] like it was -- it was pretty
15 -- like it was -- it was a very -- like that night was
16 already stressful as it was, because we had had like a
17 couple overdoses and stuff like that. So we were already --
18 everybody was already running around like a chicken with
19 their head cut off, you know. And then that just kind of
20 compounded everything else.

21 And plus man, Adams was a good guy. Like I never
22 had a single issue with Adams. I knew he was getting out
23 soon, you know. And -- and then all of a sudden, you know,
24 we got that call. And I'm like, "Wait, no way," you know.
25 Like that's the first thing that went through my head.

1 Because like with -- with the amount of time that
2 I worked there, like you get -- you know, you get to know
3 these inmates. You get to know where they're at. You get
4 to know their situations. You know? And so it was one of
5 those to where it was like, "No, okay, let's go see what's
6 going on."

7 And then whenever I got there, it was like,
8 "Holy crap," you know, like "Wow." And -- and like a lot of
9 people were thinking that there was a weapon involved.
10 There was not a weapon there, like at all.

11 Hello? Can you hear me? Can you hear me?

12 Oh, hold on. I'm texting you, because I can't
13 hear you now.

14 Hello? Hello? I hear something knocking.

15 Hello? I can't hear you.

16 Hello?

17 I can't hear you.

18 MR. HORWITZ: Sir, can you hear me now?

19 Hello? Hello, sir? Sir, I'm going to -- I'm
20 going to...

21 MR. LATTIMORE: Hello?

22 MR. HORWITZ: Hey, I can hear you now.

23 MR. LATTIMORE: Okay. Cool, cool, cool. There we
24 go.

25 MR. HORWITZ: I'm so sorry. I think I might have

1 [indiscernible] connected to my bluetooth headset. My
2 apologies.

3 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, it's all good, man. It's all
4 good.

5 MR. HORWITZ: What I was going to ask is: Is
6 there documentation that would demonstrate the staffing
7 issues?

8 MR. LATTIMORE: There should be. As far as like
9 from that night, there should be a roster.

10 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

11 MR. LATTIMORE: Because I know every night the
12 lieutenants and the captains have to create a roster that
13 gets sent up the chain of command. So --

14 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

15 MR. LATTIMORE: -- yes, there is some paperwork as
16 to who was scheduled to what pod.

17 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. And there were just three
18 people who didn't show up?

19 MR. LATTIMORE: No. There wasn't anyone that we
20 had to place on the shift.

21 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

22 MR. LATTIMORE: And as it was, like we were --
23 like every officer was already working six 16-hour shifts a
24 week at that particular time. So if the officers were off,
25 it was literally one of those where they earned it, because

1 we had been busting our butts like -- like God knows what.

2 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. So they -- the -- the
3 warden would just put two people in the unit?

4 MR. LATTIMORE: No. It wasn't the warden. It was
5 the captain or the lieutenant that was on shift, based on
6 the amount of staff that we had.

7 And in that particular instance, every other unit
8 except for my unit and Whiskey Unit, and Alpha Unit, and I
9 believe Delta Unit -- every other unit has one officer. So
10 you had Foxtrot with one officer, Charlie with one officer,
11 and Echo with one officer.

12 Now after that incident happened, everywhere
13 except for Alpha and Whiskey had one officer.

14 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

15 MR. LATTIMORE: Yeah [indiscernible] that was
16 horrible at that time.

17 MR. HORWITZ: So I mean, isn't there like a yearly
18 audit that happens in January, where they -- they go back
19 through and they look through this to make sure that people
20 are compliant?

21 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

22 MR. HORWITZ: And they were -- they just weren't
23 worried about being in noncompliance?

24 MR. LATTIMORE: I mean, like, it was one of those
25 to where like we prepared for what we could handle and what

1 we could help. You know, like, with the fact of, you know,
2 not enough officers are hired on, you know what I mean, that
3 doesn't necessarily fall on the captains and the
4 lieutenants; that's an HR issue.

5 You know, because the captains and the
6 lieutenants, they're literally given a list of people, like
7 okay, these are the people that are going to be on, you have
8 to put these people, you know, where they can fill the best
9 needs.

10 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. All right.

11 I mean, it -- it just seems like -- with this
12 prison it seems like there are so many issues unique to this
13 prison.

14 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

15 MR. HORWITZ: I'm -- I'm sort of confused at the
16 -- what about Trousdale is -- is so much worse than all the
17 other facilities?

18 MR. LATTIMORE: Well, the thing with Trousdale is,
19 Trousdale was designed to be a minimum security facility, to
20 where we're not supposed to house anybody with medium to
21 maximum points, none of that.

22 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

23 MR. LATTIMORE: Trousdale-Turner has, in essence,
24 become the trash can of TDOC, meaning, if prisons won't
25 accept these inmates, they literally just send them to

1 Trousdale. So you've got an -- you've got a huge mix of
2 different security levels under one roof.

3 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

4 MR. LATTIMORE: That -- that is like adding a
5 gallon of gasoline to an open flame.

6 MR. HORWITZ: Right, right. And you pair that
7 with understaffing, I imagine it's --

8 MR. LATTIMORE: Exactly. And --

9 MR. HORWITZ: -- [indiscernible].

10 MR. LATTIMORE: -- not just because of staffing,
11 but then with the drug cases, and drug overdoses and stuff
12 like that. So not only are you understaffed, but you've got
13 a majority of your inmates intoxicated on either
14 methamphetamine or heroin. [indiscernible] --

15 MR. HORWITZ: So I was going to ask about that.
16 Because we -- I got a tip that -- that this fight had
17 something to do with -- with meth. And the -- the entire
18 prison would have been locked down for almost a year because
19 of Covid. Do you -- I mean, do you have any sense of how
20 they would have gotten it?

21 MR. LATTIMORE: Well, on that instance, I'm not
22 100 percent sure, because at that point, yeah, you're right,
23 the prison was locked down from the outside. Now, on the
24 inside, it's not locked down. You know, the inmates were
25 kind of like more or less quarantined to their pods.

1 MR. HORWITZ: Uh-huh.

2 MR. LATTIMORE: Now, in Segregation they weren't
3 allowed to come out. But I do know that like say for
4 instance if someone has drugs from another pod, right, and
5 they come into Segregation, and one of the officers that
6 went through their stuff happened to miss something that was
7 in their stuff, then they would have to [indiscernible] --

8 MR. HORWITZ: [indiscernible] can get to another
9 pod.

10 MR. LATTIMORE: -- that way, yeah. And then --

11 MR. HORWITZ: But --

12 MR. LATTIMORE: -- they would do what's called
13 "fish," where they throw contraband back and forth to each
14 other, connected to strings, and then they could pull it in,
15 you know.

16 Now what I do know is whenever I was there, no
17 drugs were discovered or found. But I also was not a part
18 of the search procedures for that cell, because once the
19 EMTs arrived, I literally sat with the inmate the entire
20 time until the county coroner came to take jurisdiction over
21 his body.

22 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. Do -- do you know if Elledge
23 said anything?

24 MR. LATTIMORE: Elledge -- Elledge literally
25 refused to talk about it. The only thing that Elledge had

1 said was once we opened the door, all he said was, "I'm
2 sorry." For the rest of the night he acted like as if
3 nothing happened. That was also how I knew that dude was
4 crazy.

5 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Do you --

6 MR. LATTIMORE: [indiscernible].

7 MR. HORWITZ: -- know anything about his security
8 designation?

9 MR. LATTIMORE: His security designation should
10 have been "max," because with Elledge [indiscernible] you'll
11 see Elledge has been to Trousdale a few different times.

12 MR. HORWITZ: Right.

13 MR. LATTIMORE: And he keeps getting shipped out
14 to Riverbend, which is maximum security. But Riverbend
15 doesn't want to deal with him, so they ship him back to
16 Trousdale. And it's like a constant cycle of him bouncing
17 back and forth.

18 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. When -- when you say
19 "should have been max," what -- do you know if he was?

20 MR. LATTIMORE: I believe that he was, but I'm not
21 100 percent sure, because I didn't deal in classifications.

22 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

23 MR. LATTIMORE: [indiscernible].

24 MR. HORWITZ: All right. Do you know why he was
25 housed with Mr. Adams?

1 MR. LATTIMORE: I do not know. I know Mr. Adams
2 was in Segregation for protective custody.

3 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Do you know -- and do you
4 know what [indiscernible]?

5 MR. LATTIMORE: (No audible response.)

6 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. Segregation, you're alone,
7 right?

8 MR. LATTIMORE: What do you mean, like in your
9 cell?

10 MR. HORWITZ: Right. Like he -- like he doesn't
11 have a -- like a cellmate?

12 MR. LATTIMORE: No. That's -- that's not the
13 case. In Segregation it's still two-per.

14 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

15 MR. LATTIMORE: Now, Elledge should have been by
16 himself. [indiscernible] --

17 MR. HORWITZ: Is that because of his security
18 designation?

19 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

20 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

21 MR. LATTIMORE: Elledge should have been by
22 himself, because there's even -- like even the officers will
23 tell you, Elledge was coo-coo for Cocoa Puffs.

24 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Like violent, and getting
25 into trouble, that sort of thing?

1 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. Like violent, like
2 boisterous talk to them and stuff, and always had weapons on
3 him. He was known for attacking officers, known for
4 attacking other inmates.

5 MR. HORWITZ: And would it -- I -- I guess I'm
6 trying to figure out why if somebody is in protective
7 custody they would -- they would be matched up with somebody
8 like that.

9 MR. LATTIMORE: I honestly think they just put him
10 where an empty bed was, because how it usually goes in
11 Segregation. Once the inmate is going to Segregation, first
12 we take him to intake. And once we get him in intake, then
13 the count room looks for an empty bed in Seg. Once they
14 find an empty bed in Seg, just plug and go.

15 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Do you know if they had
16 been housed together for while?

17 MR. LATTIMORE: On that one I am not sure. Once
18 again, that would be something that the count room at
19 Trousdale could address, because the count room was
20 responsible for placing all of the inmates in their assigned
21 cells.

22 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. I mean, I -- I assume
23 whatever evidence of negligence there was in -- in
24 documentation is gone by this point. But that's probably --

25 MR. LATTIMORE: On that one, I'm not 100 percent

1 sure. Because what I do know is the counts, they're turned
2 in to TDOC after every count. And with those counts also
3 are the cell assignments with those counts as well. And at
4 the beginning of every shift, that opening count, we go
5 through and we do what's called a E-TOMIS check, which is
6 making sure that all the inmates are in their assigned
7 cells, per E-TOMIS.

8 E-TOMIS is the -- is the Tennessee system that has
9 all the inmates' information, from their security level to
10 their housing assignments, to their good times, to their job
11 assignments, pretty much -- it's -- it's pretty much like
12 the Google for inmates. You know, you look up an inmate
13 based on their TDOC number, you can see everything about
14 them.

15 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Got -- is there like a risk
16 manager or a compliance officer who's -- who's preventing
17 this sort of thing from happening? Because I know there was
18 another murder just, you know, like six weeks or eight weeks
19 later.

20 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. Now with that, the only --
21 the only type of compliance officer that I was aware of, it
22 was like the ethics liaison. But that was more or less for
23 officers making sure we were doing what we were supposed to
24 do.

25 As far as like risk management and stuff like

1 that, that was way above my pay grade, so I can't answer
2 that, because I don't know.

3 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. And like the warden is not
4 worried about being sued or anything? I mean, it just seems
5 like are so many incidents at this prison.

6 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, well, on that case, man, like
7 CoreCivic is all privatized. So the warden himself, it --
8 he wouldn't get sued for it. It would fall on CoreCivic.
9 And then CoreCivic would deal with it however they see fit
10 to deal with it.

11 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. And even like bring everybody
12 in, do a debrief as to how this happened, how to prevent it?

13 MR. LATTIMORE: On that one, no. I know that day
14 -- like the day -- the morning after it all happened, they
15 called all the officers that witnessed it, they called us in
16 to speak to the investigator. But the investigator never
17 spoke to me.

18 MR. HORWITZ: This is a CoreCivic investigator?

19 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. She works at CoreCivic,
20 Investigator Woods (phonetic).

21 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. And when you say "all the
22 officers" that saw it, you're talking about after -- after
23 he was dead, right?

24 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. I'm talking about the
25 officers that responded, and the other officer that was with

1 me in the hospital with the inmate.

2 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Did -- I guess did the --
3 did the docs at the hospital -- did anyone say anything that
4 would be important to know?

5 MR. LATTIMORE: Well, they pronounced him dead on
6 the scene --

7 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

8 MR. LATTIMORE: -- which is the first time I'd
9 ever seen that happen. Because Trousdale at night, there's
10 no doctors there, and only doctors can pronounce a person
11 dead. But the EMT that was there, I guess he was the
12 captain, and he pronounced him DOA.

13 And once we got to the hospital, they kind of put
14 us in a storage room with him. Like -- like -- because this
15 hospital is very small, so they didn't necessarily have a
16 morgue.

17 So it was literally me, one other officer, and the
18 deceased. The deceased was restrained to the bed, and he
19 was not placed in a body bag until the county coroner came
20 to take jurisdiction over the body.

21 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

22 MR. LATTIMORE: Because once we got into the
23 hospital, we could not do anything to him. We couldn't
24 cover him up. We couldn't uncuff him. We literally could
25 not touch him because at that point he was evidence.

1 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. And every -- this is
2 blunt-force trauma, right?

3 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

4 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

5 MR. LATTIMORE: It was ruled blunt-force trauma.

6 MR. HORWITZ: Whew. God. I guess that's all I
7 can think of to ask.

8 Is there anything else that I -- that I need to
9 know about this?

10 MR. LATTIMORE: With that particular incidence,
11 I'm not 100 percent sure. Yeah, I've told you everything
12 that I know. I've told you my involvement in it.
13 Everything else, I'm not 100 percent sure on.

14 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. They -- they don't --
15 CoreCivic doesn't encourage people to, you know, destroy
16 documents or anything, do they?

17 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, negative. No. We've never
18 been told to destroy or tamper anything. Now, as far as
19 writing reports go, they will tell us, you know, to kind of
20 word things differently. But that's only on like uses of
21 force and stuff like that, like getting technical with it.

22 Like we can't say that "the guy threw a punch."
23 We can say that "he took his left arm -- or left hand with a
24 clenched fist and struck so-and-so's body part," like what
25 body part they hit or like --

1 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. For -- for something like
2 this, though, I guess what I'm concerned about is I -- I
3 sent a records request to -- to CoreCivic and got like
4 nothing back.

5 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

6 MR. HORWITZ: Or very, very little back. I just
7 -- I'm surprised, you'd think with a -- you know, a murder
8 in the facility there would be -- there would be a lot more,
9 and there wasn't.

10 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, yeah, definitely. Definitely.
11 Now, I think, honestly, on that one, I think CoreCivic is
12 trying to cover their butt --

13 MR. HORWITZ: Right.

14 MR. LATTIMORE: -- because the fact of us being,
15 you know, not properly staffed. Like if -- like I said, if
16 we were staffed, that incident would have turned out way
17 different.

18 But you know, like at the end of the day,
19 CoreCivic is the one, in my opinion, that is responsible for
20 that happening, because number one, they knew Elledge's
21 track record. Number two, they knew Adams' security level.
22 And number three, they should have known that at any point
23 in time -- you know, Elledge has already harmed other
24 inmates -- he shouldn't be around anybody.

25 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. When you say, turned out

1 differ -- could have turned out differently if they were
2 properly staffed, what -- what do you mean by that?

3 MR. LATTIMORE: I mean, I'm saying that I think
4 Adams would be alive --

5 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Do you -- do you think --

6 MR. LATTIMORE: -- like no -- no doubt in my mind.

7 MR. HORWITZ: Do you think your -- your coworkers
8 would agree with that -- or your former coworkers?

9 MR. LATTIMORE: I think the ones -- I think the
10 ones that still work for CoreCivic would not comment on
11 it --

12 MR. HORWITZ: Right.

13 MR. LATTIMORE: -- because they would probably lose
14 their job. But if they weren't still employed with
15 CoreCivic, I do think that they would agree.
16 [indiscernible] --

17 MR. HORWITZ: Like CoreCivic would fire people for
18 -- for testifying against them?

19 MR. LATTIMORE: Pretty much, yes, because whenever
20 we worked for CoreCivic, we are assigned -- we have to sign,
21 of course, an NDA that the stuff that happens there, we
22 can't speak to media about it unless, you know, there's a
23 CoreCivic spokesperson there. We can't comment on anything
24 to medias while we're still employed by CoreCivic.

25 We can't even go on a Facebook post unless it's

1 making CoreCivic look good, you know. We can't say anything
2 about what goes on in the prison, or we will be fired.

3 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. That -- and they make
4 people sign that up front?

5 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

6 MR. HORWITZ: Jeez.

7 MR. LATTIMORE: That's apart of your entrance
8 paperwork.

9 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

10 MR. LATTIMORE: They have -- they have a class on
11 it in the training academy.

12 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Is that unique to
13 CoreCivic? Did they make you do that at TDOC?

14 MR. LATTIMORE: I'm not sure. I didn't do
15 corrections with TDOC, I did corrections with the
16 United States Army.

17 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Got it. But once -- once
18 you get to CoreCivic, they -- they put that thing in front
19 of you and they make you sign it?

20 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, yeah, definitely. Definitely.
21 Now, of course, I mean, in the military, it's kind of the
22 same thing. You know, like you can't say anything that
23 could be a detriment to the military. But with CoreCivic,
24 yeah, that thing goes on.

25 Because like there was -- there was one incident

1 where I was with an inmate at the hospital, and he had died
2 and come back. Right? Because he had -- he had already
3 health complications, and he was getting up there in age.
4 And like he died and he came back. And like that -- that
5 experience like kind of shook me a little bit, right?

6 So I was talking about it on Facebook and one of
7 my coworkers was like, "Hey, you need to take this down,
8 because if somebody from HR sees it, they're going to fire
9 you."

10 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Is that common? Do people
11 get fired for doing that?

12 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

13 MR. HORWITZ: Wow. Can you think of anybody who
14 might talk to me about this other than you?

15 MR. LATTIMORE: About this particular incidence?

16 MR. HORWITZ: Yes.

17 MR. LATTIMORE: I don't have his phone number, but
18 I know you can look him up on Facebook, because he was there
19 with me. Now, I'm not sure that he'll talk to you, because
20 he was kind of a jerk. But [indiscernible] yeah, his name
21 is Tristan Morgan (phonetic). And --

22 MR. HORWITZ: And this is a former
23 [indiscernible]?

24 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. Yes, he's a former CO. He
25 was one of the officers that responded to it with me. He

1 actually threw up whenever we opened the door. Like he was
2 very shook. After that incident, he refused to work in
3 Segregation --

4 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

5 MR. LATTIMORE: -- like would not go back.

6 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Do you know if he spoke to
7 the investigator?

8 MR. LATTIMORE: I'm not sure if he did.

9 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

10 MR. LATTIMORE: Because I know we sat around and
11 we waited. The investigator never showed up. And me and a
12 few of the other officers, once that stuff happened, we
13 actually -- this is going to sound a little jacked up --
14 this is like at 11:00 in the morning, we went out and got
15 drunk.

16 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

17 MR. LATTIMORE: Because we kind of had -- you
18 know, it was -- it was very -- it was rough for all of us.
19 Especially because, I mean, like we knew how Elledge was,
20 and we knew the type of person that Adams was. Adams was
21 not -- you know, he was not an aggressive person. You know,
22 he wasn't -- he wasn't a bad dude. But Elledge was just
23 psycho.

24 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. You said -- you said
25 Tristan Morgan?

1 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. Tristan Morgan.

2 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. And the -- and the other
3 people who would know something about this still work there?

4 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. They -- they are all still
5 currently employed.

6 MR. HORWITZ: At -- at Trousdale, or --

7 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

8 MR. HORWITZ: -- or CoreCivic generally?

9 MR. LATTIMORE: At -- at Trousdale.

10 MR. HORWITZ: Okay. Well, I may have to try to
11 talk -- were -- were there a bunch of people that -- that
12 got involved after he --

13 MR. LATTIMORE: There was -- well, the -- the ERT
14 is five officers, plus the other two officers that was
15 there.

16 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

17 MR. LATTIMORE: Now, I know some of the ERTs --
18 excuse me -- they couldn't leave their units because they
19 were the only ones in their units. So I know there was me,
20 Lucas (phonetic), Morgan -- Lucas was the one that initially
21 discovered him. He's the one that made the call.

22 MR. HORWITZ: Okay.

23 MR. LATTIMORE: Harmon (phonetic) was down there.
24 Williams -- but Williams was SORT (phonetic), and Williams
25 is from Georgia. And the rest was SORT. I know, of course,

1 Captain Beaver (phonetic) and Lieutenant Murray (phonetic)
2 responded as well. And Officer Roberts (phonetic) was the
3 officer that was with me at the hospital.

4 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Did --

5 MR. LATTIMORE: And at the point that --

6 MR. HORWITZ: Did everybody have to write a
7 report?

8 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. We had to write what's
9 called a 51C, because all of the reports at Trousdale are
10 labeled under 51 documentation. But 51C is the officers
11 incident report. So we had to write literally what we seen.

12 So in my report was, after I had finished count --
13 because I had just got back to my unit from returning the
14 count paperwork to the count room, we got the call, "Got an
15 inmate face down in a puddle of blood."

16 We did everything we could to subdue Elledge,
17 because at first he was refusing to cuff up. But once we
18 got him cuffed, once I made entrance in through the door, I
19 flipped the body over and started CPR.

20 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. [indiscernible].

21 MR. LATTIMORE: So yeah, one thing that I can say,
22 the officers that were on scene, we did everything per --
23 per CoreCivic and TDOC policy. [indiscernible].

24 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

25 MR. LATTIMORE: Yeah. Like the only -- the only

1 people who are at fault here is CoreCivic for, you know,
2 them housing him with him, and the fact that we did not have
3 adequate staff.

4 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. And that's -- that's
5 somebody in the classification department and then somebody
6 in HR who's just not --

7 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

8 MR. HORWITZ: -- giving you enough officers?

9 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. Because --

10 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

11 MR. LATTIMORE: -- [indiscernible] plus in
12 Segregation, you're supposed to make rounds every
13 30 minutes, which it takes you about 15 minutes to make a
14 good round and physically check on living, breathing bodies.
15 But whenever you've only go two officers having to do that
16 to five pods, it -- it takes a long time.

17 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. How much -- how much, if
18 you had to estimate it?

19 MR. LATTIMORE: At least double.

20 MR. HORWITZ: At least double.

21 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. Because you're -- you're
22 literally doing three other people's jobs.

23 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Do you know if they fixed
24 the staffing issues after this happened?

25 MR. LATTIMORE: I know for a little bit, yes, but

1 even as it stands now, they're still severely understaffed.
2 I've still got tons of my former coworkers asking me to come
3 back because [indiscernible] enough staff.

4 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Yeah, because right after
5 this, Mr. Childress died, right?

6 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes.

7 MR. HORWITZ: And that was a classification issue,
8 too, as I understood it.

9 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes, with Mr. Childress, that was
10 -- again, that's something that happened in Segregation.
11 And with that one, from what I had heard, his cellmate had
12 gotten a [indiscernible]. Because his cellmate was a snitch
13 on the compound.

14 And his cellmate had gotten a message from
15 everybody in Segregation was like, "Look, if you don't take
16 out your cellie, we're going to take you out. But you have
17 to leave this facility someday or another. And the only way
18 out" -- he could get out was killing somebody.

19 MR. HORWITZ: Jesus Christ.

20 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, yeah. Like the inmates at
21 Trousdale are ruthless.

22 MR. HORWITZ: When you say --

23 MR. LATTIMORE: Like --

24 MR. HORWITZ: -- "snitch" of the facility, you're
25 talking about like reporting people for drugs or whatever?

1 MR. LATTIMORE: Yes. Like he told on somebody for
2 something, that's how he got into Segregation. Like if you
3 get into PC, that's because you told on somebody. Like that
4 -- that's really the only -- that's one of the only ways
5 that the captains and the lieutenants will move you to
6 protective custody.

7 Because there's a lot of inmates, you know, they
8 get themselves into trouble, you know, they'll make deals
9 with the wrong people. And then the first thing they'll do
10 is, "Oh, I want to hurt myself, or I want to hurt somebody
11 else," just to go to protective custody because of a mess
12 that they got themselves into. You know?

13 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

14 MR. LATTIMORE: And so like if an inmate comes to
15 staff and is like, "Hey, I want an RCA," all we can do is,
16 number one, we -- we can try to remove them from the pod,
17 and then we call for assistance.

18 And then nine times out of ten, when the captain
19 or the lieutenant comes, they're either going to take the
20 inmate back into the cell and secure him into his door, or
21 they're going to say, "Look, you have to tell me something
22 and make me know -- to let me know that, okay, this is
23 something for real, like you are serious, you're really
24 going to get hurt if we don't do something." And then
25 they'll get moved to Seg.

1 MR. HORWITZ: Is that -- is that why Adams was
2 there?

3 MR. LATTIMORE: Adams, I'm not sure why he was
4 there. I just know that he was there for protective
5 custody. I'm not sure how he got there, or anything like
6 that.

7 Because me, as an officer, I try to, you know,
8 like not necessarily look at inmates' convictions and their
9 security levels, because some people do things, and you
10 know, I don't necessarily agree with it, and I don't want to
11 take that fight into it. You know?

12 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Got it. And is no one in
13 CoreCivic's like corporate office or HR or whatever worried
14 about the blowback for something like this? It -- it just
15 seems like not being in compliance, being understaffed, and
16 having people murdered would be a huge problem, but they
17 just don't seem to care.

18 MR. LATTIMORE: I think that it's one of those
19 things to where it's the power of the almighty dollar. You
20 know? Because CoreCivic gets 200 million from State of
21 Tennessee, and they want to keep that money. They want to
22 keep it coming in.

23 Like we got paid based off of bodies. You know,
24 we'd like -- whenever we counted and we finished count,
25 that's when they cash the check.

1 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. And understaffing helps
2 them save money?

3 MR. LATTIMORE: Definitely. Because what they'll
4 do is, like they'll higher a bunch of people, and then
5 they'll start firing a bunch of people. And then they'll
6 higher a bunch more and then they'll fire a bunch more.

7 And then, you know, they would much rather pay,
8 you know, eight officers on night shift a bunch of overtime
9 to run that entire facility, you know, versus having three
10 officers per unit 24 hours a day, which they're supposed to.

11 MR. HORWITZ: And -- and the people who -- who
12 regulate the prisons, they don't -- they don't pop them for
13 this sort of thing?

14 MR. LATTIMORE: If they do, I don't know.

15 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Well, thank you so much.
16 This has been extremely valuable. I -- I really, really
17 appreciate it. I know this is -- this is probably not easy.
18 I would traumatized if -- if I had to experience what you
19 did here.

20 MR. LATTIMORE: Well, yes. But I mean, like with
21 three deployments under my belt, and I was military police,
22 so I was a combat MOS, you know, like for me it -- I mean,
23 yeah, it sucks, but I mean, that's -- that's the nature of
24 the beast, you know. Like you don't -- you don't sign up to
25 work in corrections if you're not expecting to see some

1 stuff like that.

2 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Got it. Why did you get
3 out, just out of curiosity?

4 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, I got out because I got tired
5 of working 16-hour shifts and not having anything to show
6 for it.

7 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

8 MR. LATTIMORE: And I got tired of seeing less
9 qualified officers getting promoted.

10 MR. HORWITZ: Got it.

11 MR. LATTIMORE: Yeah, because I was -- whenever I
12 got out of the military, I was an E-6, I got out right after
13 I did two tours as a drill sergeant. And so I'm thinking,
14 you know, at least my military experience enough would be
15 enough for, you know, some type of promotion after being
16 there for 9 months working six days a week. But they seen
17 it otherwise, and you know, crooked unit managers and
18 crooked captains, and I was like, "Yeah, you know what?
19 This ain't for me."

20 MR. HORWITZ: Well, good for you. What are you
21 doing now?

22 MR. LATTIMORE: Now, I'm actually -- I'm actually
23 what I was doing before I went back into corrections. I am
24 what's called a spray technician. I treat weeds and lawns.

25 MR. HORWITZ: Good for you.

1 MR. LATTIMORE: So I make [indiscernible] lawns
2 look really pretty.

3 MR. HORWITZ: That's wonderful.

4 MR. LATTIMORE: Yeah.

5 MR. HORWITZ: Well, good for you for getting out
6 of this business. It seems awfully grisly.

7 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, yeah. Grisly is an
8 understatement. Like it's -- like Trousdale-Turner is
9 rough, man.

10 MR. HORWITZ: Well --

11 MR. LATTIMORE: [indiscernible].

12 MR. HORWITZ: -- it certainly seems that way.

13 Then core -- CoreCivic doesn't -- do they do
14 anything to discourage people from -- from talking to people
15 like me after they leave?

16 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, after they leave, no.

17 MR. HORWITZ: No.

18 MR. LATTIMORE: Like how I left, I told them that
19 I might have had Covid, and I did. And I just never came
20 back.

21 MR. HORWITZ: Got it. Got it. Well, thank you.
22 Thank you for your time. Thank you for just --

23 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh yes, sir.

24 MR. HORWITZ: -- talking through this with me.
25 This is enormously valuable, and I'm -- I'm really grateful.

1 This is my cell phone number. I can give you my
2 email, too, if you want to get in touch with me. I'll tell
3 my investigator we connected so he stops bothering you.

4 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, that's -- like that's --
5 that's all good, man. Like I said, I do -- I had a bunch of
6 stuff come down the pike recently, and so I've been meaning
7 to get in touch with you guys a lot sooner. But things have
8 just been like really crazy.

9 But like if you got any more questions for me or
10 anything like that, just please feel free to like shoot me a
11 text, you know, and then I'll definitely get in touch with
12 you.

13 MR. HORWITZ: Thank you. I appreciate, you, sir.

14 Talk to you soon.

15 MR. LATTIMORE: Oh, yes, sir. Thank you, man.

16 You have a great rest of your day.

17 (End of recording.)

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